

REMARKS

By this Amendment, claims 1 and 19 are amended, and claim 20 is added. Accordingly, claims 1-20 are pending in this application. Applicants submit that the amendments made to claims 1 and 19 are made to clarify the claims, by explicitly reciting that which was implicitly recited in the original claims, and not to distinguish over any applied reference. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the claims are not narrowed by such amendments. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative at the personal interview conducted November 30, 2004. The substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks, which constitute Applicants' record of the interview.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Office Action indication that claims 9 and 18 are allowable. However, for at least the reasons set forth below, Applicants submit that all claims are allowable.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-8, 10-17 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,923,788 to Rao further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,850,478 to Suzuki et al. (hereinafter "Suzuki"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action admits that Rao does not disclose to "reduce the amount of the input image that extends over the edge disturbance," and relies on Suzuki to allegedly provide the missing subject matter. However, Applicants submit that Suzuki also does not disclose to "reduce the amount of the input image that extends over the edge disturbance present in the output media," as recited in claims 1 and 19.

As discussed during the personal interview, Suzuki discloses in column 3, lines 6-15, that "a scanner (reader unit) 201 reads an image and outputs an image signal. A image signal

obtained by the scanner 201 is converted by an A/D converter 202 into binary and multi-value (e.g., 256-gradation level) image data. The image data is temporarily stored in an image memory 203, and processing operations for detecting punch holes in the image data stored in the image memory 203 and changing areas corresponding to punch holes into white images are preformed by a CPU 204 based on a program and data stored in a ROM 205 and a RAM 206 connected to a CPU 204." As described in the above cited portion of Suzuki, Suzuki detects edge disturbances (punch holes) in the image data, which was obtained from a input image. Suzuki is not directed at all to edge disturbances present in the output media, but deals entirely with edge disturbances in the input image.

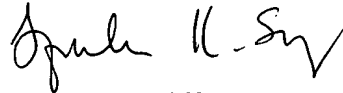
Accordingly, as agreed to during the personal interview, neither Rao nor Suzuki discloses or suggests either alone or in combination each and every feature recited in claims 1 and 19. Claims 2-18 depend from claim 1, and are patentable for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 1, as well as for the additional features they recite. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1-8, 10-17 and 19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

New claim 20 is original claim 9 rewritten in independent form by incorporating the features recited in independent claim 1. Based on the Office Action indication that claim 9 would be allowable if rewritten to be in independent form, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 20 is allowable.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-20 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Jaquelin K. Spong
Registration No. 52,241

JAO:JKS/tbh

Attachment:
Letter to Official Draftsperson

Date: December 1, 2004

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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